

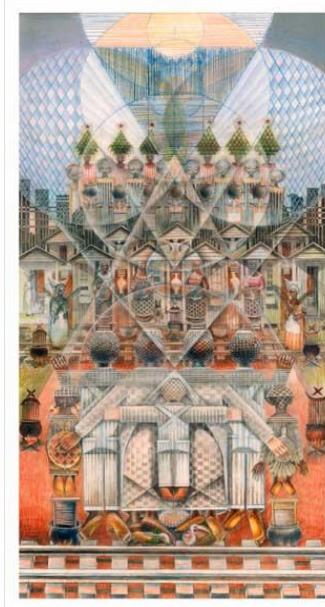


## Strategic Arts Plan for North Carolina 2015-2019

### Executive Summary

The North Carolina Arts Council launched its work in 1964 as awareness for the importance of arts to all citizens was becoming a national movement. In the ensuing fifty years the arts in North Carolina have come to be valued as one of our state's most durable and productive assets. Over the years, the Arts Council has imagined and executed an innovative vision for arts development that touches every corner of the state.

After decades of vigorous work, experimentation, and refinement, our state's arts infrastructure reaches into all 100 counties through one of the most highly developed and effective networks of local arts



"Acension"  
by John Biggers

councils in our nation. An abundance of outstanding artists and arts organizations continues to enrich our communities. These people and institutions improve quality of life, educate and inspire our youth, and stimulate an extraordinary amount of economic activity.

North Carolina's nationally recognized arts infrastructure serves a fundamental requirement for our democratic society to thrive—bringing forward ideas, concepts, and emotions in many creative forms so that citizens can deepen their understanding of the world while discussing and debating the important issues of our time.

Twenty years ago the Arts Council accurately asserted that arts and cultural vitality would become a critical factor in North Carolina's economic growth in the 21st century. Acting on that belief, we became a national leader in leveraging the arts for tourism, job creation, and downtown revitalization. We anticipated a surging interest in cultural tourism that drew us to focus on heritage arts and have created tourism trails that crisscross the state and promote our music traditions, writers, and crafts artists to the world. Deploying the arts to re-invigorate neighborhoods and business districts is another focus of the Arts

Council. Through the SmART Initiative we are assisting cities as they transform downtowns and attract millions of dollars in investments from the private sector.

The North Carolina Arts Council is also a proven leader in the arena of education. The A+ Schools program, which uses the arts to teach across the entire curriculum, has been hailed as the nation's most successful whole school reform program using the arts. A+ began here in North Carolina, has now spread to three other states, and regularly receives national attention from enthusiastic business leaders and educators who testify about its proven ability to enhance creativity in our students.

Few agencies within state government have practiced the art of collaboration as fully as the Arts Council. Our partnership with the Department of Commerce resulted in the documentation of the Creative Industries sectors and led the state tourism office to highlight the arts in national and international marketing initiatives. Working with the Department of Transportation we have expanded our tourism trails to new regions. Through our on-going collaboration with the Department of Public instruction, we have helped to implement and evaluate the A+ Schools program and formulate new arts education policy.

Building upon our past and current work, the North Carolina Arts Council is well positioned to make important contributions to the Governor's goals of economic development, education, and government efficiency. At the same time, as we envision our future, it is imperative that we anticipate the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead in a rapidly changing state.

Strengthening our public-private partnerships in the arts is a high priority. The early leaders of the North Carolina Arts Council foresaw the importance of private investment and required matching funds for our grants. Today these allocations have grown to an average of \$17 raised for every \$1 we grant to the field. Greater private investment will be required in the years to come. To help address this need we have recently formed the North Carolina Arts Council Foundation, which has already attracted significant private support for A+ Schools and the SmART Initiative. The Foundation will help deliver additional resources to augment the growth of these and other arts programs that our citizens want for their communities.

Our capacity as a state to celebrate, reflect and engage the growing diversity of North Carolina's communities is equally important to the Arts Council's future sustainability. Our historic African American arts and community traditions draw significant participation each year. North Carolina has the distinction of serving as home to the largest numbers of Native Americans east of the Mississippi. Our Latino and Asian populations have also increased dramatically in recent years. Of course, our diversity is also generational; younger North Carolinians participate in the arts in ways that are quite different from those who created and supported the Arts Council in earlier decades. At the same time, the proportion of North Carolinians over the age of 65 is on the rise, and an estimated 17% of our residents are challenged with disabilities.

These distinctive communities have nurtured some of the richest arts traditions in our state, and likely hold the greatest potential for future growth in arts participation. Fully embracing the arts in communities that are presently underserved within our infrastructure requires us to continuously examine how we assign value to artistic expression. Our vision for ongoing arts development in North Carolina is built upon the recognition that cultural diversity is a tremendous asset to the arts, and that correspondingly our policies and programs will recognize, support and leverage the artistic contributions of all North Carolinians.

Our Strategic Plan builds upon the Arts Council's national reputation for innovation and stays true to our founders' ideal of North Carolina as a state of the arts for all citizens. After seeing our roadmap for the next four years, we hope you will agree that the arts, more than ever, are among the most essential resources needed for growth and prosperity in its many manifestations.

—Wayne Martin, Executive Director

## NC ARTS COUNCIL 2015-2019 STRATEGIC ARTS PLAN GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

### Core Belief

Among North Carolina's greatest assets are its arts, which fuel a thriving creative economy, prepare students for successful futures, and are essential to building and enriching our communities large and small.

### I. Invest in North Carolina's Arts and Culture

1. Strengthen the artist workforce across the state.
2. Catalyze growth and foster sustainability of exemplary arts organizations.
3. Shape the Grassroots Arts Program to meet the needs of the state's growing population.

### II. Fuel a Thriving Creative Economy

1. Grow cultural sector of the tourism industry by expanding the N.C. Arts Trails program.
2. Through the SmART Initiative, provide resources to cities and towns for transformative arts-driven economic development projects.
3. Through research and evaluation, document and promote the impact of the Creative Economy.
4. Partner with the Department of Transportation to enhance gateways, highways, and bridges through the Governor's Art That Moves You initiative.

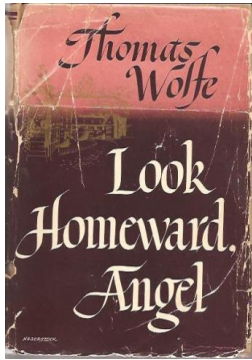
### III. Prepare Students for Successful Lives and Careers

1. Strengthen the impact of the A+ Schools Program, the most successful national arts based model for whole school reform.
2. Enhance student learning through arts experiences that spark creativity and imagination.
3. Influence policy to advance the role of the arts in the state's education systems.

### IV. Lead to Ensure a Strong Future for the Arts

1. Increase private and public support for the arts and access to new funding streams.
2. Strengthen the arts industry's capacity to embrace diversity and engage our state's changing communities.
3. Expand public awareness about the importance of the arts to the lives of North Carolinians.

## I. INVEST IN NORTH CAROLINA'S ARTS AND CULTURE



Penland founder Lucy Morgan instructs a weaver, 1930s.

### What We're Building On

- Our enviable artistic heritage is anchored by the legacy of world-renowned artists who were pioneers of their art forms. This list is long and includes, among others, painter Romare Bearden, novelist Thomas Wolfe, jazz composer Thelonius Monk, bluegrass master Earl Scruggs, gospel legend Shirley Caesar, and glass artist Harvey Littleton. We are nationally recognized for our deep rooted craft and music traditions, and our literary legacy that includes Alan Gurganus, Maya Angelou, Anne Tyler, and David Sedaris.
- North Carolina's spirit of innovation incubated new institutional and educational models such as Black Mountain College, the NC School of the Arts, and a number of "firsts," including the first local arts council, state symphony, state-funded art collection, outdoor drama, folk festival, and craft school. More recently the state has become a magnet for creative industry jobs in design, software development, and video gaming.
- An influx of new festivals, indie music, and film productions are invigorating local arts scenes across the state. The Hopscotch Festival and IBMA's World of Bluegrass are bringing thousands of visitors to downtown Raleigh. Clubs in Durham, Chapel Hill, and Asheville are coveted stops on national indie band tours spawning rich local music scenes. Wilmington's success in attracting film and TV productions has spread throughout the state seeding a growing roster of emerging film talent and technical experts.
- Our reputation as a livable, affordable, artist-friendly state has attracted large and active communities of artists around Penland, Asheville, Wilmington, Seagrove, and the Triangle. Prominent university art departments successfully recruit accomplished arts faculty and students. The NC Arts Council is recognized as a national leader in supporting artists through its grant programs, achievement awards, and career development workshops.
- The Arts Council's significant investment in the arts for over fifty years has developed a sustainable infrastructure of arts organizations that serves every corner of the state. These organizations are key to their regions' economies, offer a multitude of ways for citizens to engage in the arts, and are critical resources for schools providing arts experiences that enhance student learning. Our long running Outreach Program has supported the sustainability of arts organizations of color. The African American Heritage Commission's Gathering Place Project,

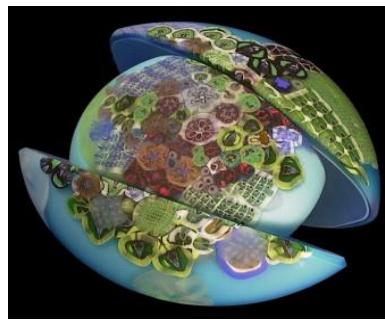
funded by the Institute of Museum and Library Services, is building the capacity of the state's numerous African American cultural sites.

- Our pioneering Grassroots Arts Program has spawned one of nation's largest networks of local arts agencies and created a delivery system for ensuring quality arts programs that engage citizens across all 100 counties. Strengthening rural arts councils, especially in the east, has been a recent focus. With our help, new arts councils have been launched in Greenville and Wilmington, and we have helped revitalize arts councils hard hit by the recession.

## What We Want to Do



*Mint Museum of Art, Charlotte*



*Glass art by Richard Ritter*

### 1. Strengthen the artist workforce across the state.

- Retain and attract outstanding artists to North Carolina.
  - Award fellowships and locally administered project grants to artists to stimulate the creation of new work.
  - Honor the lifetime achievement of master traditional artists through the NC Heritage Awards.
  - Fund artists to conduct community residencies through the Mary B. Regan Community Artist Residency.
  - Provide support to the Poet Laureate to promote North Carolina writers and the enjoyment of literature in communities across the state.
- Provide entrepreneurial and business skills training to artists.
  - Convene Creative Capital retreats and workshops annually.
  - Partner with university art departments to expand students' awareness of resources and knowledge of arts-related business training and career options.

### 2. Catalyze growth and foster sustainability of exemplary arts organizations.

- Challenge arts organizations to produce programs of artistic excellence with demonstrable community benefits.
  - Fund State Arts Resources and other arts organizations that consistently present outstanding programs that engage citizens and visitors and contribute to community growth and well-being.

- Expand technical assistance services to build the capacity of arts organizations.
  - Create an organizational development curriculum that includes an annual workshop series, and an expansion of instructional webinars and organizational consultancies.
  - Through the New Realities Program, provide long-term organizational development to non-profit organizations annually. Partner with the Triangle Community Foundation to develop a regional New Realities model to strengthen a consortium of Triangle based arts organizations.
  - Seek new technical assistance models to strengthen the management of culturally diverse arts organizations.

### 3. Shape the Grassroots Arts Program to meet the needs of the state's growing population.

- Administer the program across all 100 counties ceding decision-making for arts development to local communities while promoting excellence and community impact.
  - Provide per capita funding to counties through local arts councils or arts partners.
  - Expand regional approach by recruiting additional arts councils to become Regional Arts Partners and serve neighboring counties in need of assistance.
  - Contract with a Regional Arts Coordinator to provide on-site assistance to arts councils in transition and organize regional meetings to develop collaborative projects and opportunities to share resources.
  - With the assistance of an advisory group, create a comprehensive curriculum of technical assistance for arts councils at all stages of organizational development.

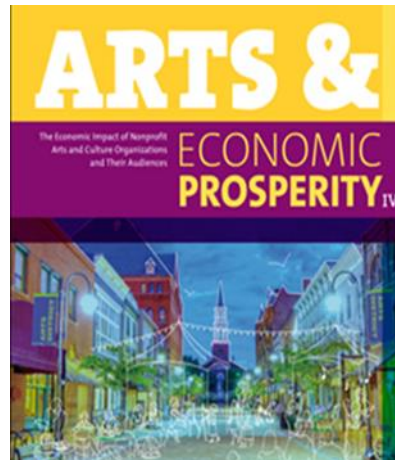




## II. FUEL A THRIVING CREATIVE ECONOMY

### What We're Building On

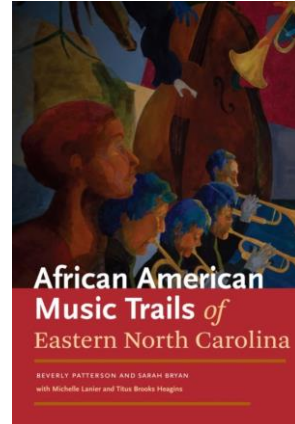
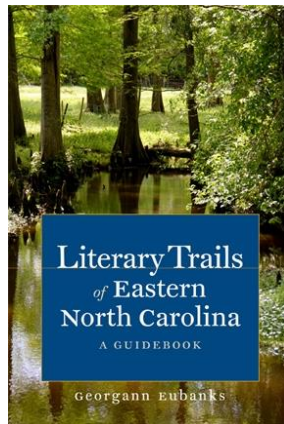
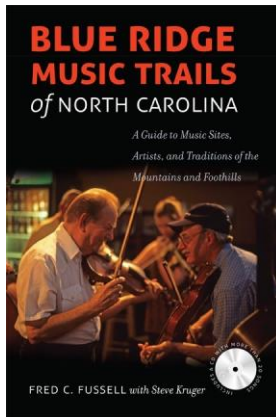
- The Arts Council's early leadership in cultural tourism brought national recognition and federal funding for the cultural tourism trails we developed. The trails showcase our distinctive cultural assets including Appalachian music, Cherokee arts and culture, literary heritage, and African American music. We produced guidebooks, CDs, web sites, brochures, and maps and commissioned public art projects to promote the trails to tourists and visitors. The Department of Transportation contributed more than \$600,000 to support trail development.
- We've amassed an impressive body of research that shows the economic impact of the state's creative sector. We've partnered with the Department of Commerce, and commissioned research from American for the Arts and the Western States Arts Foundation's Creative Vitality Index. The results show that the state's creative industries are responsible for nearly 334,000 jobs (6% of state workforce) and generate more than \$20 billion in revenues. The number of jobs in creative occupations has increased more than 8.4 percent since 2006 despite the recession. Our nonprofit arts and culture sector generates \$1.24 billion in direct economic activity, supports more than 43,600 full-time jobs, and provides \$119 million in local and state government revenue.



- In 2011, we published the SmART Initiative Task Force Report and launched five demonstration projects in Durham, Burnsville, Wilson, Winston-Salem, and Greensboro. Each community is working with local resource teams, Arts Council staff, and expert consultants to create large-scale arts driven economic development initiatives. From the Vollis Simpson Whirligig Park in Wilson to an artist designed plan to enhance walkability and connectivity in fast growing downtown Durham, these projects are designed to use the arts to showcase each community's identity and distinctive character and increase private investment and visitation. We recently raised \$90,000 in foundation funding to continue our work in three additional communities.

## What We Want to Do

### 1. Grow cultural sector of tourism industry by expanding the N. C. Arts Trails program.



- Complete final phases of development of existing arts trails.
  - Design responsive web sites for all trails and keep them updated and fresh in order to attract repeat visitors.
  - Finalize construction of Kinston Music Park, which showcases the African American Music Trail.
  - Complete Freedom Roads cultural trail that highlights freedom-seeking along the Underground Railroad.
- Reach national and international audiences through a dynamic marketing program.
  - Create visitor itineraries, tours, exhibits and artist directories that complement and promote trails. Provide resources to local partners to promote their arts and cultural assets to visitors.
  - Collaborate with NC Division of Tourism to make the state's arts and culture a more prominent feature of VISIT NC.
  - Sponsor NC stages to showcase trail artists at large nationally attended events such as IBMA and the National Folk Festival.

### 2. Through the SmART Initiative, provide resources to cities and towns to produce transformative arts driven economic development projects.

- Complete SmART Initiative projects in Durham, Burnsville, and Wilson. Seek private and public funding to add 1 – 2 new projects annually.
- Advocate for the importance of Historic Preservation and other tax credits that are key to downtown revitalization.



- Establish protocols to measure the impact of the SmART Initiative and other creative economy initiatives. Promote the impact of SmART demonstration projects to secure support for a legislated art and cultural districts program.



*Night View from the Durham SmART Artscape Vision Plan, created by Mikyoung Kim Design*

### 3. Through research and evaluation, document and promote the impact of the Creative Economy.

- Commission state study as part of Americans for the Arts' 2015 national survey of the nonprofit arts and culture industry's impact on the economy. Provide subsidies to local arts councils to commission customized studies for their counties.
- Update the Creative Vitality Index annually to track for profit and nonprofit creative sector revenues and job growth.
- Collaborate with Department of Commerce to promote the arts as job creators and resources for business recruitment.

### 4. Partner with the Department of Transportation to enhance gateways, highways, and bridges through the Governor's Art That Moves You initiative.

- Work with Department of Transportation (DOT) landscape architect and engineers on SmART Initiative gateway project in Burnsville.
- Assist DOT in creating an aesthetics design manual. Recommend additional SmART Initiative projects and gateway projects at Welcome Centers for collaboration.



*Illustration of idea for new Burnsville gateway on Highway 19E by artist Jack Mackie*

### III. PREPARE STUDENTS FOR SUCCESSFUL LIVES AND CAREERS



#### What We're Building On

- Research shows that the arts are highly effective in teaching the competencies needed for success in the 21st century global economy, including innovation, critical thinking, creative problem solving, effective communication, and collaboration. Additionally the arts create a stimulating environment for learning, improving test scores, and reducing drop-out rates.
- Led by efforts of Arts NC and key legislators, we have had success in establishing new arts education policy. In 2010, a legislatively appointed task force, co-chaired by the Arts Council Director, developed a state-wide Comprehensive Arts Education Plan. In 2012, legislation was passed requiring future educators to be trained in arts-based teaching of all subject areas. Significant legislative support has been cultivated for an arts requirement for high school graduation. North Carolina was recently selected as one of 10 states to participate in the Americans for the Arts State Policy Pilot Program, which will supply resources to address our efforts to implement the Comprehensive Arts Education Plan.
- The A+ Schools Program has had a major impact on arts-centered education reform. Since the A+ Schools Program moved to the Arts Council, fourteen new schools have entered the A+ Network, bringing the total to 46. The program is largely supported by nearly \$1 million raised in private support and revenue generated from participating schools. The A+ program has received national and state media exposure, including a feature on PBS NewsHour. Our A+ director has been at the table for national discussions about the future of arts in education, including participating in the work of the Congressional STEAM Caucus.
- We are fortunate to have a large number of accomplished teaching artists and arts organizations with strong education programs. Many individuals have benefitted from the high level arts in education training we provide through the Kennedy Center, the Lincoln Center Institute, and the Wolf Trap Institute for Early Childhood Learning. We tour the state's finest artists (mostly to rural counties) through our cARTwheels program and we provide funding for artists residencies in school and afterschool programs. Our Traditional Arts Program for Students (TAPS) gives elementary and middle school students weekly instruction in an art form with deep cultural roots in their home communities. All of these programs align with the state's curriculum standards.

## What We Want to Do

### 1. Strengthen and expand the A+ Schools Program, the most successful national model for arts-based whole school reform.

- Recruit and train new schools annually. Partner with the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) to conduct regional workshops to train educators in arts integration strategies.
- Seek recurring legislative funding to match contributions from the private sector. Refine the A+ model to better support high schools and develop a plan for high school recruitment.
- Celebrate the A+ Schools Program's 20th Anniversary by holding a three day conference to honor A+ founders and leaders from around the country and provide special training opportunities for A+ educators and administrators.

### 2. Enhance student learning through arts experiences that spark creativity and imagination.

- Tour several of the state's finest artists to school systems through the cARTwheels program. Give priority to schools where students have less access to arts experiences.
- Place artists in schools to be in residence for two weeks or more to provide longer in-depth educational experiences.
- Design and support arts programs to meet the needs of at-risk youth and curb the influence of gangs. Partner with alternative schools and social service organizations.
- Recruit outstanding artists to become teaching artists and train them through national institutes.
- Expand the Traditional Arts Programs for Students (TAPS). Develop a plan for sustaining established programs with other funding sources so that new programs throughout the state can be supported.

### 3. Influence policy to advance the role of the arts in the state's education systems.

- Promote the importance of an arts requirement for high school graduation.
- Partner with DPI and the institutes for higher learning to implement the new requirement that pre-service teachers be trained in integrating the arts into the curriculum.
- Present updates to the State Board of Education on the work done to implement the Comprehensive Arts Education Plan.



#### IV. LEAD TO ENSURE A STRONG FUTURE FOR THE ARTS

##### What We're Building On

- The Arts Council was created as a public private fiscal model, and today we are one of the most efficient and effective agencies in state government. We leverage many times over the amount of private and public dollars raised to match every state dollar spent on grants. Our newly formed North Carolina Arts Council Foundation has expanded our income streams and raised private funds to support education and economic development initiatives. The recession may be behind us, but arts nonprofits continue to be challenged by the fundamental changes in philanthropic giving. As we move forward, it will be critical to identify more innovative and entrepreneurial approaches to expanding financial support for the arts.



- North Carolina is the ninth largest state, and our population is shifting dramatically by age, race, and ethnic identity. Our Latino and Asian populations are growing exponentially. Our citizenry is trending younger and at the same time older. The cultural achievements of our diverse communities are some of the most significant in the state and nation. In particular, we've showcased African American and Native American contributions through our cultural tourism trails and other initiatives. We've received national recognition and funding for our innovative approaches to reaching culturally diverse communities and helping arts organizations expand the ways citizens can engage in their programs and offerings.
- North Carolina is also home to the third largest military population in the nation and soon Fort Bragg will be the largest army installation in the world. Our former poet laureate initiated a successful veterans writing program and helped create "Deployed," an acclaimed theatrical production based on the writings of veterans and their families.
- In 2010, we received an award from the National Endowment for the Arts in recognition of our work in arts in healthcare and in making the arts accessible to people with disabilities and older adults. We built the infrastructure for this work by supporting the Creative Aging Network and Arts Access to become statewide service providers of training in arts accessibility. We believe the sustainability of the arts industry is dependent on being able to attract and connect with citizens of all ages, ethnicities, abilities, and backgrounds.



- For over a decade, we have been dedicated to demonstrating and emphasizing the public value of the arts in creating a positive future for the state. We have shown the impact of the arts on the state's economy, the health and well-being of citizens, and the education of North Carolina students. We work with citizens to help them understand how the arts build and enrich their communities.

## **What We Want to Do**

### 1. Increase private and public support for the arts and access to new funding streams.

- Identify innovative models for drawing support from new revenue streams and philanthropic and private sources.
- Seek increased legislative funding for programs that demonstrate public value.
- Establish an effective management and administrative structure for the NC Arts Council Foundation to raise funds from the private sector.
- Expand funding partnerships with other state agencies including the Departments of Transportation, Commerce, and Public Instruction. Identify and help constituents connect with federal agencies and national foundations that support the arts.



*Students dancing at Haliwa-Saponi Pow Wow in Hollister*

### 2. Strengthen the arts industry's capacity to embrace diversity and engage the state's changing communities.

- Convene arts and civic leaders from diverse communities to help us better understand the full spectrum of how citizens are currently participating in the arts.
- Through the African American Heritage Commission, increase the sustainability and awareness of the state's African American artistic traditions and resources.
- Provide funding and training through our Folklife Program to help communities document and sustain their diverse forms of cultural expression.
- Appoint an accessibility advisory group to make recommendations for improving the capacity of artists and arts organizations to make their programs accessible to all. Provide training to artists to design accessible arts activities.
- Create a pilot program to fund model projects that showcase best practices for making arts programs inclusive of all populations. Build on the success of the veterans writing program by funding artists to conduct programs at V.A. hospitals and military bases.

### 3. Expand public awareness about the importance of the arts to the lives of North Carolinians.

- Showcase the stories and projects that demonstrate the public value of the state's investment in the arts.
- Elevate the visibility of North Carolina's distinctive arts assets through statewide, regional, and national media.
- Create a dynamic web and social presence to give citizens and visitors greater and more efficient access to information about how to experience the arts.
- Celebrate the Arts Council's official fiftieth anniversary in 2017 by highlighting its contributions to North Carolina's creativity and well-being.

